

# THE BIG ISSUE

SPECIAL EDITION  
HIGHLIGHTS OF 2015

S.C. DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG ABUSE SERVICES

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### UNITE to Face Addiction Rally...

Representatives of South Carolina's public AOD system joined thousands of attendees for the UNITE to Face Addiction launch event Oct. 4 in Washington, D.C. The rally was intended to help end the stigma surrounding alcohol and other drug addiction, and to support those who are dealing with the disease of addiction. Attending from DAODAS were **Bob Toomey** and **Samantha Collins**, along with **Beth Powell** of the Cherokee County Commission and **Laura Stuckey** of Behavioral Health Services Association of South Carolina Inc.



### Free Assessments...

In November 2014, DAODAS launched the Block Grant Assessment Project, whereby "free" assessments are provided to clients without health insurance. This effectively removed the financial barrier to entry into the system. The project also marked the first step on the journey to link expenditure of federal Block Grant funds to direct client services. In the first 12 months of the project, more than 7,000 clients received assessments paid from the Block Grant for a total draw-down of slightly more than \$1.2 million.

### Domestic Violence...

On Jan. 29, Gov. Nikki R. Haley launched a comprehensive initiative to address the culture of domestic violence in our state, issuing an executive order that created the Governor's Domestic Violence Task Force and appointing DAODAS Director Bob Toomey to the group. As part of this effort, Gov. Haley is funding new prosecutors, judges, and public defenders to reduce caseloads, decrease backlogs, and ensure that a dedicated prosecutor is assigned to every county in South Carolina. All Cabinet agencies are adopting a comprehensive HR policy for domestic violence; certain Cabinet agencies that offer direct client services are adopting a risk assessment screening policy for domestic violence; and nine professional boards have committed to including domestic violence training in their continuing education.

### NASADAD Comes to South Carolina...

The Annual Meeting of the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors (NASADAD) was held June 1-3 in Charleston, with **Bob Toomey**, **Lee Dutton**, **Frankie Long** and **Michelle Nienhius** representing DAODAS as hosts. Also assisting with the event were **Beth Powell**, Executive Director of the Cherokee County Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, and **Dr. Chanda Brown** (Director), **Jeannette Drayton** and **Alfredia Horry** of Charleston Center. An appearance by Gov. Nikki R. Haley was hailed as the first time the governor of a host state has attended NASADAD's Annual Meeting.



*Beth Powell & Chanda Brown  
at NASADAD Meeting*

### New Prevention Grant...

In June, DAODAS received a five-year "Partnership for Success" grant worth \$1.6 million per year from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The grant will fund a new project – Empowering Communities for Healthy Outcomes (ECHO) – that will specifically address prescription drug abuse/misuse among ages 12 to 25 and impaired driving, but the resulting increase in capacity will benefit communities' ability to address a wide range of local concerns.

### Prescription Drop Boxes...

In October, the Alliance for a Healthier South Carolina called for partner organizations to support the placement in every county of at least one permanent drop box for unused prescription drugs. This move came on the heels of a Final Rule enacted by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration that allows pharmacies, or organizations with pharmacies like hospitals and clinics, to maintain receptacles that collect unused prescription drugs.



## **MIGP/BPSSEM Training Initiative...**

Through the Modified Interpersonal Group Psychotherapy (MIGP) / Bio-Psycho-Social-Spiritual-Experiential Model (BPSSEM) of Addiction initiative that began in 2012, approximately 90 clinicians have been trained. Three related Regional Learning Teams (RLTs) now meet monthly in regions across the state. RLTs are peer-driven learning environments where clinicians meet to support each other in refinement of their MIGP clinical skills by viewing peers' recorded therapy groups, providing related feedback, and engaging in clinical discussion.

## **Oxford Houses...**

South Carolina has 33 Oxford Houses with a total of 219 beds. Of these, 22 are houses for men and 11 for women, with one of the women's houses also taking women with children. Two additional houses for women with children are in development, one in Columbia and one in Charleston. A 23<sup>rd</sup> men's house will open soon in Columbia.

## **Synar Coverage Study...**

South Carolina law does not require retail outlets to acquire a license to sell tobacco products, making it very difficult to accurately track the number of establishments that sell this age-restricted product. Therefore, every three years, DAODAS is required by its federal grantors to conduct a coverage study to compare the accuracy of its list of tobacco retailers with the actual outlets throughout the state. In November and December 2015, DAODAS Prevention staff drove the state's highways surveying 22 randomized census tracts and recording every tobacco outlet. Staff found 153 tobacco retail locations, 26 of which were not on the existing master list.

## **DAODAS Hires Medical Director...**

In October, John E. Emmel, M.D., was hired to serve as agency medical director for DAODAS. Dr. Emmel has been in practice for more than 38 years specializing in family, geriatric, palliative and addiction medicines. As a Fellow of the American Society of Addiction Medicine, Dr. Emmel is a welcome addition to DAODAS, bringing the experience and expertise that will help guide the agency to the next era of prevention, intervention, and treatment.

## **SBIRT Expands...**

DAODAS' Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) initiative has provided almost 162,000 initial screens to more than 50,000 patients. Across five counties, there are 14 active participating healthcare sites, four of which have begun providing services. Two counties, Barnwell and Horry, have volunteered to use existing staff to cast a wider net and expand to additional sites.



## **Adolescent Treatment Program...**

*Collaboration for Success* is a federally funded grant program that has expanded evidence-based practices for adolescents — the Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach (A-CRA) and Assertive Continuing Care (ACC) models — from four South Carolina counties to eight, reaching approximately 1,200 adolescents. The model is currently implemented in Bamberg, Berkeley, Calhoun, Dillon, Marion, Marlboro, Orangeburg, and York counties.

## **Online Learning Initiatives...**

Funded by the *Collaboration for Success*, the Learning Management System supports the state's agencies that serve children and adolescents, with 1,089 registered users from 18 state agencies and community-based organizations. So far, 702 completion certificates have been issued on 13 courses. DAODAS and the county authorities also use the online Relias Learning Management System, with 407 enrolled users completing 4,384 courses as of October 2015.

## **24/7 Telephone Coverage...**

In 2015, DAODAS contracted with Behavioral Health Response Inc. (BHR) to provide 24/7 call services, including real-time clinical support. The BHR call center is staffed with master's level clinicians who receive extensive training. BHR is also accredited through CARF and the American Association of Suicidology. Since Oct. 1, 2015, BHR has answered more than 1,200 calls for DAODAS and the county authorities.

## **Tobacco-Free Campus...**

As part of the "Healthier State" initiative, DAODAS, in partnership with the Department of Mental Health, set a tobacco-free campus date of February 1, 2016, for their 2414 Bull Street location. Signage for tobacco-cessation programs can be found throughout the building and external signage will be erected in February.

## **Naloxone...**

With the passage of the S.C. Overdose Prevention Act, law enforcement officers in South Carolina will begin carrying naloxone for reversal of opioid overdoses.

### **S.C. DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG ABUSE SERVICES**

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